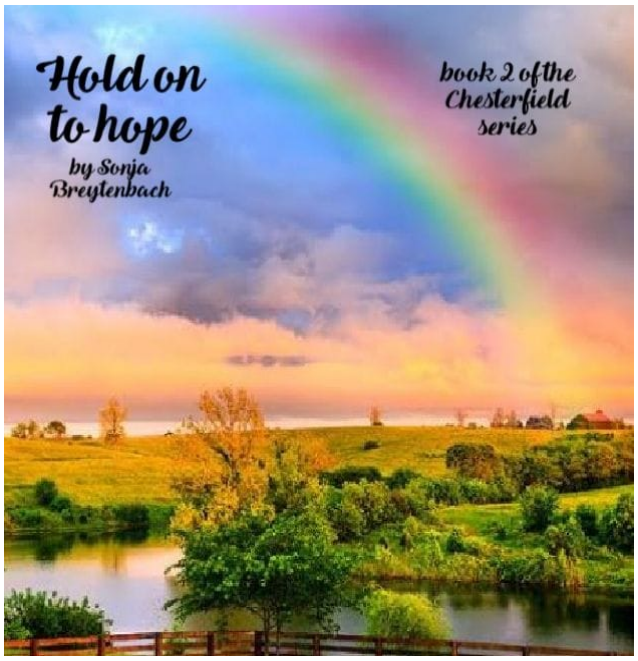


Note from the author this book is a work of fiction, places,dates,names and times is all a work of fiction. I am not a professional writer I enjoy exercising my talent to write, all the glory goes to Jesus Christ. Enjoy the journey with the characters of this book!

Hold on to hope

by Sonja Breytenbach

Book number 2 of the Chesterfield series.

He heals the brokenhearted and binds up their wounds. Psalm 147:3

Chapter 1

CHESTERFIELD 1887

It was a warm day on the Camden farm. James wiped off sweat from his brow with a handkerchief. It was hard work, he had to plant his crops if it was to be harvested come spring.

“hey there stranger” he turned around to see his brother in law Peter Wolensky standing there.

"Susan send me to bring you an apple pie, she is baking up a storm now with the little one on his way, she saw the midwife today and the midwife says the baby can be due now any minute. She is carrying big now James. You must come around more often she misses you." Peter said.

"I know she does, I'm just very busy. I'll come by as soon as the baby arrives." James said.

"You are always so busy, you must get out more, ever since that Andrea woman left you, you haven't been the same. You need to socialize and find a wife and settle down. I know what that woman did to you hurts, but you need to move on and find happiness again."

"I don't ever want a wife, I am happy staying on my own. Woman is trouble." James said.

Peter knew if he said anything it will continue in an argument. He was tired of fighting with his brother in law about this. It was sad seeing James like this, Peter really wished he could just be happy again. James haven't smiled in a very long time. His sister can't stand

seeing James like this. All they could do was pray for him.

Chapter 2

Amy Stewart got off the train. So this is the small farmers town of Chesterfield she thought to herself looking around. She has never been anywhere but Kentucky. Amy grew up on a ranch there, her brother inherited the ranch, and she felt she didn't belong there anymore. Her aunt passed away recently and she was here to see Mr. Fitzgerald to have her aunts will read today.

At the age of 32 Amy was a slender woman with blonde hair and blue eyes. She was seen as a lady although she loved to dress comfortable even though she could afford only the best. Her parents had owned many cattle and

horses and when they passed away they left Amy a big inheritance, with her brother running the ranch her parents left him. Amy wanted change so she decided to come to Chesterfield and see what her aunt might have left her. Maybe she could start a way of life in Chesterfield. It was a small town but she could tell people were friendlier here. Amy had a deep love for horses and she liked working with them.

Mr. Fitzgerald's office was a small office. He had a huge mustache that curled at the ends, and he wore a nice suit. He smelled strongly of tobacco. He was smoking a cigar just as she entered the office.

Miss Stewart, I hope all is well with you today? Mr. Fitzgerald said.

Amy took a seat and nodded.

" Let's start reading your aunt Lilly Gordons' will." Mr. Fitzgerald cleared his throat.

"Your aunt Lilly have left you the sum of Ten Thousand dollars and she has left you her ranch which is in the East side of Chesterfield. It has 300 acres. "You get all six of her horses and all her cattle. You also have a right to all her belongings and 3 wagons" Mr. Fitzgerald said.

Amy was in shock she didn't know her aunt that well, she saw her last when she was about five years old. They had brushed the horses together. Her aunt talked to her about her horses she and her husband Tom, had three horses at that time.They never had children because her aunt Lilly had many miscarriages. Her aunt looked a lot like

Amy she was her father's sister. Amy regretted not seeing her aunt more.

"Thank you Mr. Fitzgerald, I'll be on my way now" Amy said and left the office.

Chapter 3

Amy opened the door to her new house. The house had a wrap around porch. There where trees surrounding the house, the ranch house was white. Inside of the house was a writing desk and chair there was a large dining room table with chairs and a brown carpet. There where a piano in the living room with a blue velvet sofa and a armchair with a beige carpet. It had a painting of a pond on top of the fireplace. She went into the kitchen it was big. It would be nice for family gatherings. She hoped her brother will come and visit her. It was a

long way from Kentucky to Chesterfield, she knew the visit wouldn't be anytime soon so she will write him in the meantime.

Images flashed before Amy as she sat on her kitchen chair. It still felt so real. It was of her and her mother and father driving up on a wagon to her fathers friends house, they had a dinner party. Amy who was ten years old at the time went and slept up in an upstairs bedroom while the party was going on downstairs. The door to her bedroom opened, and the sound thereof awakened her. She saw a man and he immediately put a hand over her mouth. He molested her. Amy never told anyone about it, not even her own brother. The hurt and pain she still felt ran deep. Amy never wanted a man to come near her

again. She would rather be alone. Men tried to over the years but she pushed them all away. They wouldn't understand the pain she still felt. Time heals all wounds they say, but she felt like the wound was only getting deeper as the years rolled on. Amy didn't want any man.

Chapter 4

The next morning Amy was hard at work cleaning her house. She was exhausted already although it was still early in the day. She had to clean the stables too and brush and feed the horses. What she was going to need is a farm hand. So she was going to have to go into town, but that will have to wait till tomorrow.

It was early the next morning when Amy headed off to town with her two horses

that she named Molly and Spice. Molly was a beige horse and Spice was a red brown horse.

At the general store Amy asked the owner of the shop Bobby Fuller if he knew about someone who would be interested in a farm hand job.

"Put up a note on the notice board in front of the shop Miss Stewart or you can post a add in the newspaper." Bobby said.

Amy thanked Bobby for his help. She left and saw a place called Shady's across the street, she went inside and had breakfast there.

Sitting at the table next to hers was a man with a brown suit, he had brown hair. He spoke to an overweight gentleman with a beard He was going

on about how he couldn't get his horse tamed.

"I have given up" the man in the brown suit said.

Amy couldn't help but eavesdrop on their conversation.

" I can help you Mister." Amy told him

"I can work with your horse, I have worked with lots of horses in Kentucky and had good results." Amy said.

"I didn't know a woman can do that sort of thing" the man in the brown suit said.

"If the price is right we can negotiate the man continued, I'm Mr. Fletcher" the man introduced himself to Amy.

She asked Mr. Fletcher if he knew about someone who could work for her as a farm hand. He told her he knew about a

boy named Adam, the boy is a busy body, he will talk to him to come see her.

Mr. Fletcher told her where he lived, so that Amy could see about his horse.

"I'll come by tomorrow" Amy said.

The next morning Amy headed off to Mr. Fletcher's double story farm house. She worked with Spark the whole day. Mr. Fletcher was quite impressed. Spark showed improvement by the end of the day but given a few weeks Spark will be a gentle horse. She told Mr. Fletcher so.

She saw a young man at about the age of nineteen years old coming their way. The man had black hair and brown eyes. He had broad shoulders that showed he will be able to lift heavy things easily.

The man introduced himself as Adam Martin.

"I will be grateful for a job" Adam said.

Amy gave Adam directions to her ranch and told him that he must be there tomorrow morning. Adam thanked Amy and went on his way.

Chapter 5

Word spread fast about Amy Stewart. Amy was the talk of the town. People couldn't believe a woman could tame horses and do it so fast as well. Mr. Fletcher had only good things to say about Amy. Amy's business grew and each week she had a new horse to work with. Amy knew she now needed a housekeeper too. Amy enjoyed what she did, she didn't always have easy clients

but she pulled through because she loved her job.

Amy had numerous proposals from men while she had breakfast at Shady's. Today was the butcher's turn. Amy declined she had no interest in wanting a husband whatsoever. she was content.

Amy placed an add in the newspaper looking for a housekeeper and an older woman in her mid sixties replied.

The woman's name was Ann Platter. Miss Platter was a short woman with red gray hair and blue, green eyes.

She is a widow and needed the extra income. She was warm and friendly. Amy learned she had two sons both of them are miners they wrote her a lot.

Miss Platter made sure Amy ate a good breakfast most mornings before Amy went off to see her clients.

Miss Platter and Adam worked hard that Amy could have a warm bath once a week. They both hauled water from the well and lit a fire underneath the bath tub to warm it up. Amy was grateful. Adam was so young but he was a smart boy he learned fast. Amy taught him all she knew about horses and cattle. Adam sure was a busy body just like Mr. Fletcher said. Amy and Mr. Fletcher spoke often when she saw him in Town, he was responsible for most of Amy's clients. They have become good friends.

Amy's cattle count grew big with Adam's help, she had to think of selling some cows. Amy was exhausted at the end of each day, at nights she just got into bed and slept like a baby. Some nights the nightmares came and when she couldn't sleep she would sit outside on her front

porch and look at the moon an the stars. If only she could just forget.

Chapter 6

James fell on the ground. Ranfield was wild he nearly knocked the daylights out of James. The Stallion was too wild for him, he was sure he could tame the horse. James couldn't resist to buy the black Stallion when he saw it at Ben Brown's auction. The horse cost him a heavy penny. What was he going to do with Ranfield now? This horse will cause the death of him, if he didn't make a plan and fast.

A knock came on the barn door. Peter saw James lying on the ground.

"Are you okay? Peter asked James."

"It's this horse I don't know if I should keep it or what must I do with it. I must have known I'm going to have my days buying a Stallion, I don't know what came over me." James said.

"Have you read about that new lady in Town, I think her name is Amy Stewart. She works with horses like this. I'm sure she can help you tame your horse. Go see her,what do you have to lose?

James looked at Ranfield he was so beautiful, how could a woman tame such a wild animal? He didn't know of anyone else in Town who could help tame his Stallion. Ranfield cost him a lot, he had to see if this lady could help him. He just didn't want the lady to get hurt in the process.

The next morning James loaded his wagon with his horse Buck, and headed

off to see Amy Stewart. The road was dusty and the morning sun was already making him sweat buckets, He should have bathed in the river before coming. He longed for the coolness of the water now.

A huge white farm house loomed in front of him. Amy must be a wealthy lady. Cattle where seen grazing on his right side. There stood a young man in the road as he came up to the house."

"Hello, I'm looking for Amy Stewart, I'm James Camden." James said.

"I'll quickly call her for you?" the boy ran into the house." A few moments later a tall lady, with long blonde hair that flowed over her waist, wearing a white buttoned blouse and brown long riding skirt came out of the house. She greeted James but she didn't smile. Even though

she didn't he could tell she was a friendly person in her own way.

"Hello miss Stewart I'm James Camden, how do you do?" James extended his arm

"I'm just fine Mr. Camden, what can I help you with?" Amy asked.

"I need you to come take a look at Ranfield my Stallion. I have bought him this week and he has been more than a handful. He needs to be tamed, I have heard you are the best in town at what you do."

After a few minutes of silence Amy said "I'll take a look at your horse, but let me get Miss Platter my housekeeper to make us some tea."

She led him into the kitchen then.

"You have a lovely house" James told her.

"Thank you" Amy said. She took a seat then at the table. Miss Platter served them scones and strawberry jam and she poured them each a cup of tea.

"Is it only the one horse that needs taming?" Amy asked him brushing a strand of hair out of her face.

"Yes, he is a beauty, I couldn't take my eyes of him at Mr. Brown's auction.

"I thought I could tame him myself but he has knocked me over a few times now."

"Stallions can be hot headed" Amy said.

"I won't be able to have results in a day. You are going to have to give me a few weeks to work with him. I'm asking

three dollars each day that I work with him." Amy said.

James wanted his horse tamed badly so he had to shake his pockets.

Amy got on her wagon and James on his and they both went to the Camden farm. The Camden farm was big. Bigger than Amy's ranch. They walked past a chicken pen and three donkeys. She saw he had a wooden cabin a short distance away, she saw sheep about also. He showed her where the barn is where he kept Ranfield. Ranfield was indeed a very beautiful horse just like James said. He was wild all right. Amy struggled to get close to him but eventually did. She reassured Ranfield by talking softly to him."It's okay, good boy" Amy told Ranfield. The horse stood still.

James stood at the back,not wanting to get in Amy's way. He had a fear for Amy's life,but Amy handled it pretty well. The horse seemed calmer already just with Amy being around. He couldn't believe what he saw. He had never met a woman quite like Amy.

Chapter 7

James watched Amy everyday. She sure knew what she did. Amy knew a lot about horses. James was impressed. When they had tea together, he could sense a sadness about her. James carried his own. Maybe Amy saw that in him too. He liked Amy more each day. They talked about the horses, the farm life and the talk of the town. They actually laughed together. James told Amy about the towns upcoming dance

and asked Amy if she would join him. Amy hesitated, then said she will think about it. James was a nice guy and all but she didn't want to get close to a man.

Two weeks after James and Amy met Amy knew breaking this Stallion was not going to be easy, but she showed James what to do to break the horse. and James did break the horse eventually. Ranfield was a different horse after that. James could actually touch Ranfield now without him being scared. James hugged Amy then and said "Thank you" Amy just smiled.

She really appreciated James' friendship and told him so.

The word friendship resounded in James' ear on his ride home. He didn't like the word friendship. James couldn't believe

his two weeks with Amy was over. He wanted to see her everyday. Was he falling in love with this woman? How could this be?

Amy had a way about her to make him forget about his past and his hurt.

Looking up at the moon on his wagon riding home he didn't know Amy was also looking up at the moon from her front porch. She was asking God in prayer to heal her hurt. Amy got up went to bed and thought of James' smile before she drifted off to sleep.

Chapter 8

In the mercantile the day before the towns dance. James saw Amy and asked her to breakfast. Amy agreed. Over bacon and eggs and a strong cup of coffee. James asked Amy again to go to the dance with him. James was very convincing. Amy agreed. How could she say no to James, he was after all an attractive man too in his own way. Amy couldn't understand why she hadn't notice it earlier.

The night of the dance James picked Amy up. She was wearing a blue satin dress. Her blonde her was done up in curls. The blue dress brought out her eyes. James had never seen Amy looking so lovely. He told her then that she looked lovely. Amy thanked him. James

helped her onto his wagon and they both commented on what a nice evening it was.

Amy and James danced and a lot of men wanted to interject and have a dance with Amy. Amy was used to men's attentions, but she wanted to be with James and told all the men there that she would only be dancing with James that evening. This made James thrilled he smiled broadly. They had a wonderful evening. James took Amy by the hand and helped her onto the wagon to take her home. On the way home they didn't speak much, when they stopped the wagon in front of her ranch house, James let Amy down from the wagon. She told him she had a wonderful evening. On her way up the steps James said loudly "Amy wait! I had a wonderful evening actually I like every moment

when I'm with you, I want to court you Amy. Please say yes."

Amy came closer she hugged James then and looked in to his eyes "Yes" she said. They kissed then, it was a long and deep kiss.

On his way home James was floating in the clouds. Inside Amy's home with her back against the door, Amy was floating in the clouds too.

Chapter 9

James and Amy courted. They where the talk of the town. James introduced Amy to Susan and Peter and their baby boy Samuel. James would still go see Amy working taming horses. On Sundays they went to church together.

They would have picnics and swim in the river on James' farm

The past wasn't hurting them like it did before.

One day when Amy was brushing his horse Beck. James stared at Amy, she was the one he wanted to marry her.

Chapter 10

CHESTERFIELD 1889

On a Sunday lunch with family, about two years after James had decided that he wanted to marry Amy, James went on his knee and asked Amy to marry him.

Amy said "yes" James was thrilled.

Two weeks later they got married. Mr. Fletcher, Susan and Peter and people from town and Amy's brother Alex attended. Amy wore a beautiful lace

white dress that she bought. She looked beautiful.

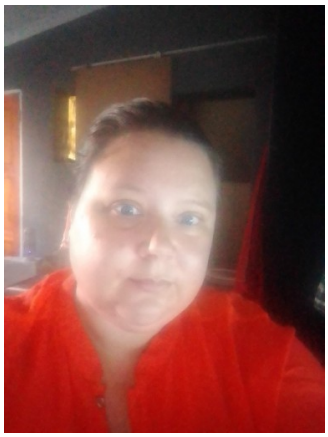
Amy and James travelled between their ranch and their farm. They lived that way.

Amy kept on working taming horses.

Amy got a housekeeper for the Camden farm too.

They had five children. Two boys and three daughters. James and Amy lived till their old age.

The end.



About the author she lives in Johannesburg, South Africa where she enjoys reading and writing and poetry.